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Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

AID-20 RSR-01 DPW-01 OMB-01 IO-12 EUR-25 /141 W
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P 120418 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 26
USDEL JEC PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 6172

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI CB VS
SUBJECT: MR IV APRIL 10 SECURITY SITUATION UPDATE

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO PHNOM PENH FROM CAN THO APR 12 REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE CAN THO 0169

REFERENCE: (A) CAN THO 0141 (NOTAL), (B) CAN THO 0163 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: APRIL 10 CONTACTS IN KIEN PHONG AND KIEN GIANG REPORTEDLY PRODUCED HEAVY ENEMY LOSSES. THE LOCALE OF THE FIGHTING
AND THE LOPSIDED STATISTICS REPORTED INDICATE THAT SEVERAL OF THE CONTACTS MAY HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN NVA/ VC CAMBODIAN SANCTUARIES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MR IV G-2 OFFICE STATES THAT THE ARVN CROSS- BORDER OPERATION REPORTED IN THE APRIL 11 SITREP (REFTEL B) INVOLVED AN NVA " ATTACK" ON A RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY OF THE 14 TH REGIMENT, ARVN 9 TH DIVISION,
NORTHEAST OF HONG NGU DISTRICT TOWN. THE " ATTACK" WAS SAID TO HAVE OCCURRED AT 1 PRT HOURS, APRIL 10, AT WT 407033. THE RESULTS REPORTED WERE ONE FRIENDLY KIA, ONE FRIENDLY WIA, AND THREE ENEMY KIA AND ONE AK-47 CAPTURED.

3. THE HEAVIEST CONTACT IN MR IV ON APRIL 10, ACCORDING TO THE
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G-2, OCCURRED IN KIEN LUONG DISTRICT, KIEN GIANG PROVINCE. AN NVA/ VC " ATTACK" ON A RANGER BATTALION AT VS 590210 RESULTED IN 44 ENEMY KIA AND A SIGNIFICANT HAUL OF ENEMY WEAPONS, INCLUDING MORTARS AND MACHINE GUNS. IN THIS AND TWO OTHER SEPARATE ENCOUNTERS, EACH OF WHICH ALSO REPORTEDLY INVOLVED NVA/ VC " ATTACKS" ON RANGER BATTALIONS EARLIER IN THE DAY APRIL 10, REPORTED GVN CASUALTIES WERE NIL. TOTAL ENEMY CASUALTIES WERE FIVE KIA. THE LATTER TWO ENCOUNTERS ALSO REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS BUT ON THE CAMBODIAN BORDER AT VS 405526 AND VS 388533.

4. COMMENT: MGEN NGHI HAS BEEN SMARTING ABOUT THE INVIOLABILITY OF CAMBODIAN SANCTUARIES IN THE FACE OF THE HONG NGU ATTACKS (REFTEL A). THOUGH MINIMIZING FRIENDLY AND MAXIMIZING ENEMY CASUALTIES HAS ALWAYS BEEN A POPULAR ARVN REPORTING TECHNIQUE, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THIS ALONE ACCOUNTS FOR THE STERLING MILITARY SUCCESSES REPORTED ABOVE. EXCEPT FOR THE KIEN LUONG ENCOUNTER, THE
LOCUS OF THE FIGHTING RESTED EXACTLY ON THE CAMBODIAN BORDER. THIS FACTOR N THE STATISTICS, AND THE TIME OF DAY THE OPERATIONS WERE CONDUCTED SUGGEST THAT ARVN FORCES MAY HAVE ENJOYED AN ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WHICH BELIES THE CLAIM THAT THE GVN WAS ON THE DEFENSIVE. COUPLED WITH THE APRIL 11 STATEMENT OF THE ARVN BRIEFER REPORTED IN REFTEL B THAT A UNIT HAD CROSSED THE BORDER NEAR HONG NGU, THESE FACTORS ALSO INDICATE THAT ARVN OPERATIONS MIGHT BE SPILLING OVER INTO NVA/ VC CAMBODIAN SANCTUARIES. SIGNED BARNES UNQUOTE BUNKER

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